1: Lorimer T-3 (1920–4; 1934–5) 1938 AV7 Burusho AV7

[17] diagonally superimposed on each other, exactly duplicating some of
354 the ancient smoke-holes recently unearthed in Central Asia by Le
342 Coq. A large store-room about 6 feet deep runs the full width and height of the house and is entered by a door at the back of the central atrium. It is provided with a minute, unglazed, shuttered window, the only 'window' known in Hunza except in the houses of the Mir
● 352 and the Wazir. The furnishings of the living room are simple but
513 adequate. Two large sleeping benches, some 7 feet wide and 9 feet
354 long, flank the side walls, and are raised 18 inches or so above the floor. The sleepers roll themselves in homespun blankets or padded quilts and sleep crosswise on the bench like parallel sausage rolls. One bench is reserved for men and the other for women. The hearth occupies the centre of the floor and is outlined by four stone kerbs. The sleeping benches, which serve by day as sitting places, are screened at head and foot by capacious cupboards, one of which serves the mistress of the house for her kneading trough and other utensils, another takes the form of a large bin with sub-divisions to hold the current supply of flour.

415 The normal cooking pots and oil vessels, lamp cruses, etc., are of
324 hollowed soap-stone, often of gracefully irregular shape, reflecting that of the boulder from which they have been hewn. Gourds furnish
322 the usual 'jugs', and wooden bowls, nowadays frequently turned on a
177 lathe, the eating vessels. Wooden spoons and ladles are cut in one piece, the handles being formed by a convenient branch or twig. The delightful result is that no two pots, bowls, or spoons, are identical in size or shape. Unfortunately aluminium or enamelled iron vessels and galvanized buckets are finding their way into the country. We ourselves were, I fear, guilty of adding to their number and even introducing a few multi-service kerosene tins.

241 The greater number of field implements are still of wood, though
412 the ploughshares are now usually shod with an iron shoe or tip, and a
563 lucky family may have acquired an iron spade or hoe or a five-pronged
326 iron fork. A small community of ultimately Indian origin, the Béricho, lives amongst the Burusho and supplies the music for their polo and dancing and the blacksmithery of their simple ironwork: the shears, the rude sickle, the sharpened scrap of iron that serves as razor.

[412] The sharpened stone or ibex horn, which till very recently served
335 for all necessary carpentry, is now replaced by the iron-headed adze
342 which hacks out the steps on the log ladder and shapes the narrow planks for doors and cupboards. The true Hunza door consists of a set of

2: Lorimer T-3 (1927–8; 1934–5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

342 after a day or two the stone-and-mud walls have dried to the same appearance of timeless indestructibility as those of fifty or one hundred years ago. We passed first, as always, through a small byre, not yet inhabited by its cow; then at right angles through a dark, narrow passage 5 or 6 feet long, and then through the low hall-door into the house itself. Your main object in building a house at all is to be as warm and free from draughts as possible during the "Great Cold," and no one in his senses would let his hall-door open straight on to the wind-swept mountain side. Hence the byre ante-room, which not only defeats the direct outside air, but contributes something of animal warmth to the human warmth within.

291 291 352 When we emerged into the living-room (the *atrium*, as it were), beautifully bright with light from the smoke-hole, we were standing in a shallow trough below the floor level where the newcomer kicks off his muddy boots in winter. Most people at all well-to-do wear soft home-made boots up to their knees in winter-time. But skins are precious and, however cold the weather, they take their boots *off* to save them when they come to an extra rough bit of ground. This entrance place has in it the "musicians' bench," under which are stored the family basin and similar utensils and on which is piled a store of firewood.

342 [352] The floor of the room is a small square of hard-beaten earth which in this gloriously dry climate remains admirably clean; and roughly in the centre of it is a shallow hole, edged with four stone kerbs, which is the hearth. Behind the hearth is a low bench sacred to the lady of the house, the presiding genius 343 of indoors. Beside it she sits to do or superintend the cooking 251 and behind her is a low wooden door opening into the store- [414] room; the home-made wooden key of which hangs always on her person. The store-room runs the whole width and height of the house. It has need to be a roomy place, for here stand the skin sacks of grain, the heaped baskets of potatoes, apples, dried mulberries and apricots, the kernels, the wool, the stone wine-jars, the jars of apricot oil, the basket of savoury herbs—all the family's supplies for a twelvemonth, which it is her duty to guard and to apportion.

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920–4; 1934–5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

LAND AND HOUSES IN HUNZA

As you enter, you turn your eyes left and with your free 342
right hand salute the master of the house and wish him peace. [576]
You will find him seated on a spacious dais raised well above 352
the earthen floor and comfortably carpeted with goats' hair
rugs of his own weaving, or it may be with felt carpets from
Kashgar. The left-hand wall of the dark passage through which
you have entered screens the end of this recessed dais, and is
lined with a capacious cupboard reaching to the ceiling. At
the head of the dais is a gigantic wooden bin, divided into
chambers each with its separate lid, in which the various kinds
of flour are stored as they are ground for use: barley, wheat,
millets, and buckwheats. The dais itself is 6 or 7 feet wide
and 10 or 12 feet long, the men's sitting place by day and the
major sleeping bench by night. Each person has his own set of 352
bedding—padded quilts or homespun blankets—in which he 513
rolls himself like a sausage. The sleepers lie crosswise on the
bench, which is wide enough to let them stretch full length,
and when neatly packed for the night eight or ten can be com-
fortably accommodated. On the opposite side of the room is 352
the minor bench, equally roomy, but an inch or two less
raised, which is the women's sitting place by day, and at night
the sleeping bench for women and children. It also has a built-
up cupboard at the foot, and at the head, corresponding to the
large flour bin, the housewife's spacious "yeast-cupboard" in
which she keeps her kneading trough and rolling-pin, her
cooking-pots and what not. Its door is at her left hand as she
sits on her cross-bench, and the top of it serves as general
shelf, table, and "dresser." A more admirable scheme of 342
architecture, better suited to the family's needs, would be 352
difficult to devise. The complete absence of windows gives a
sense of security and cosiness; the complete absence of sense-
less "furniture" gives a delightful feeling of space and peace
and leisure, and makes you want to go home and make a
bonfire of your tables and chairs. How much more we have
lost than gained by learning to sit on chairs and losing the
pliability of joint that makes squatting natural. How much
unnecessary domestic slavery goes to our "housework." Every 356
morning the Hunza women take the family rugs and bedding

round him, he looked extremely comfortable and well-protected. Next, a piece of wide cloth was threaded by its hem on a rod fastened along the side of the cradle, and passed several times over his tummy and under the wooden cot, being finally lashed to the ridge pole. If the cradle had then been knocked over or rolled down hill baby could neither fall out nor get bumped. Finally a thick blanket was thrown over like a tent, and he was safe from dust or smoke or flies—or fresh air. Mother gave a few gentle rocks and he settled into sleep.

The use of the cradle in Hunza is said to be relatively recent, and the pattern of it, wherever it was introduced from, includes the prescription that it shall be made from a special sort of hard wood that grows wild on certain mountain spots and is supposed to possess magical properties. The ridge-pole forms a convenient carrying handle, and wherever you see a group of women working and chatting together, spinning in the shade or on the roof, beating out new-washed wool on a sandy patch beside a stream, pounding kernels, washing clothes, or busy on the threshing floor, you will usually see a cradle or two beside them. Truby King might disapprove of so much infant seclusion; but the flat roof offers a drop of 12 or 14 feet on to boulders, and even the living-room a gentle roll into the open hearth, so that Hunza is no place for crawlers. By the time baby is ripe for toddling, he is old enough to be entrusted to the next-older children, who take him pick-a-back or on their shoulders, scaling walls and leaping streams with him as sure-footed as young goats, and as fearless. They carry him to some flat spot and guard him with the most scrupulous care and proudly watch over his first steps.

Babies in Hunza are spaced at intervals of three and four years, so no mother is worn out with child-bearing or embarrassed in her daily work by ex-babies clinging to her skirts and jealous of the infant in her arms. Banu, for instance, was four, sturdy and ripe for independence, before Faqér came to claim the family's attention. Soon after his arrival we used to see her stalking about, proudly taking her first walks alone, and obviously savouring the new freedom from older supervision. One day she had passed twice or three times up and

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

cumference, twisted them with his fingers till he had a small 286
nucleus of double thread. With a wooden peg he fastened this tiny ball so that it could not unroll, and started swinging it round his head, letting it touch the ground now and again to increase the spin. It travelled in wider and wider circles till the connecting thread became of unmanageable length and began to kink. Then he hauled it in and wound the beautifully twisted length of doubled thread on to the little ball and again pegged it down. Thus he continued till the original ball was exhausted.

Not long after, the Ustád's Hérul Nisa came to say that they were setting up a goats'-hair loom at their house if we would care to see it. We found that this time a large vertical frame standing on the roof of No. 8, lashed to the rafter of the balcony, and in course of being strung with just such a warp thread as Kalbi had shown us in the making. While Hunza sheep [233]
are uniformly white, three kinds of goat are kept: white, brown, and black. Black hair is used for the warp, while the bobbins are wound with white and brown. The bobbins in this case are long, needle-like rods the full width of the cloth, 2 feet or so, with the hair wound round notches in each end. There are only two heddles, thrown backwards and forwards by a forked peg like a boy's catapult. Goats'-hair weaving is a slower job and heavier than wool-weaving, but the Ustád is master of it, too, and was again initiating two younger men. The different coloured hair allows of pattern-weaving, and they enjoy devising new stripes and squares of brown and white. A very heavy comb is needed to beat down the intractable material, and in order to prevent the cloth being drawn too tight by the cross threads, two "bows" of flexible wood were spiked across it to keep it flat and taut. These are inserted as near as possible to the working edge and moved up 352 ●
as work progresses. The goats'-hair strips are used as rugs, or 415
doubled and sewn together to form sacks and saddle-bags.

One day we were exploring the half-ruined village of the 346
old fort, threading the narrow switchback alleys between 345
deserted houses—so narrow that in places you could only edge along sideways—looking for points of vantage from which to

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1989 AV7 Burusho AV7

WINTER AND THE "GREAT COLD"

I had expressed a wish to see what winter life "By the Lamp" was like, and one day Levy Kalbi brought an invitation from his womenfolk to join them some evening in their house. I was warmly welcomed into the living-room, where twenty people were at home and many guests besides myself had been invited. The guests included all our own household except the Kashmiri sweeper. I made my way over to the women's side of the house and murmured such compliments as I could improvise, on the skill and diligence with which they stitched and teazed and span. It was amazing. I could only hope that their zeal was perhaps a little extra on my account. Presently, when all had settled down after my incursion, a princely dish of potatoes cooked in *maltash* (producing a sort of Irish stew effect) was set on the floor in the centre and a wicker platter heaped with bread and another piled with grapes. Kalbi had most thoughtfully asked me to have my own dinner before coming, for he feared that I might not be able to enjoy their food (as *maltash* is an inevitable ingredient in any food set before a guest, this was both tactful and humane). Another large dish of grapes was set near me, and the children who clustered round shared them with me without reluctance.

Again I marvelled at the spaciousness and freedom gained by an absence of furniture. We must have been thirty or forty in that tiny-seeming room, yet there was no sense of crowding, and there was perfect ease of movement. And again I marvelled at the natural graciousness and instinctive good manners of these unsophisticated folk. My hosts and hostesses, who had never had a European in their house before, made me feel welcome and at home, and were evidently not conscious of the slightest embarrassment themselves. In a few minutes two or three prostrate sausage-rolls of bedding came to life, bright eyes peeped out and the respective mothers' exhortations, "Go to sleep again, darling!" were just as successful as their equivalents in similar circumstances at home.

Only a couple of the very senior men of the family shared the extra feast, but the guests were warmly pressed to fall to. Each folded a flap of bread round his potato and ate it neatly as from an egg-cup. Then Kalbi's old father, the patriarch of

344 This massive old fortress, for that is what it was,
644 was actually one of the places that had withstood the
712 attacks of invaders for more than 400 years and re-
727 mained impregnable. It has only once been in enemy
[175] hands since the day it was built and that was in 1891, when, after the Battle of Nilt, it was occupied by the British. Records further indicate that the British added no glory to their occupation at the time because of their indiscriminate looting of the treasures found in the palace. But the Mir, whether because of his friendship for the British or because of his desire to tell the truth, claimed that it was not the British who looted it, but the Dogra troops who were under British command.

344 Here I would like to quote from E. F. Knight's
644 *Where Three Empires Meet:*

●352 "This massive fortress, which has been for hundreds of years the secure stronghold of the robber kings, inviolate until this day, stands boldly out, set in the midst of a sublime landscape . . . Twigg, Boisragon and myself took up our quarters in the most comfortable chamber we could find, which we soon discovered to have been the apartment of the ladies belonging to the
[643] Thum's harem. ("Thum" is Burushaski for ruler, sovereign, king, chief, "Mir". Used especially of the hereditary rulers of the states of Hunza and Nagir.) It was surrounded by a low, broad, wooden divan, on which our bedding was laid. Pillars of carved wood rose from the edge of the divan to the carved beams of the roof, blackened by the smoke of ages. . . . A fire was lit in the open fireplace at one end of the floor, the smoke escaping through a square hole in the roof. Save for the Oriental pattern of the wooden carvings it was just a hall, I imagine, as King Canute might have lived in. . . . We enjoyed a delicious night's rest after our late fatigues.

322 that I have seen performed, I am not too sure that
[177] our wood workers could teach them any new tricks. The thing they're short of is suitable wood.

[415] One of the important functions of the wood turner is to fashion bowls which are made out of either mulberry, willow or apricot wood. The wood turner also
[352] makes charpoys, chests, jewel boxes, bowls and chairs and I believe he is capable of making anything that can be fashioned out of wood.

461 One definite thing impressed me about these various craftsmen and that was the fact that time was meaningless. Their craft was the important thing. Whatever had to be done had to be done right whether it required an hour or a day or a week.

461 There were many things that I would have liked to
126 purchase or arrange for but some of them would require days to produce and it was not my desire to hurry anybody. After seeing their pleasant way of life, I had no intention of disturbing it. Whatever was available that I wanted, I would take with me. Anything else could be sent on or else I would do without it.

of the Aga Khan and his wife in various poses and stages of his life. I had given some study to these photographs and many of them were inscribed in the hand of the Aga Khan with endearing terms to his friend, Jamal.

Our quarters were in the guest house—actually adjoining the palace but on a higher level. This building had been erected by the Mir's grandfather back in 1925. It was a well-built, handsome structure, firmly ensconced on a high rocky ledge of granite.

You walked down the Mir's long staircase from the sun room, then you walked up half a dozen or more stone steps, forward a few feet and then you climbed up a circular, enclosed wooden staircase to the guest quarters. These consisted of a large, comfortable sitting room with many easy chairs and a fine writing desk, a large bedroom with two comfortable beds and further on was the bathroom. Then to the right of the lovely sitting room was a balcony—spacious and inviting. From it you could view Rakaposhi and all its splendor and gorgeous loveliness.

The furniture all round was similar to that which you would find in the average better-class American homes. Photographs adorned the walls, among which were the photos of the old Aga Khan and his French wife.

When I mentioned the Aga Khan to the Mir, he waxed eloquent and his face beamed and he said, "Not only was I fond of him—not only did I love him—but we were close intimate friends. He was the most generous of men and especially to the people of Hunza. I revere his memory! He was a wonderful person. We really miss him since his passing. His ancestors came from Persia to India in 1834. In 1934, one hundred years later, to celebrate the jubilee of the founding of

A farmer who owned and worked 10 acres of workable land might be able to afford to slaughter a sheep, a goat or a bullock once a year. Yet this luxury could not be dreamed of by the farmer with but one acre.

Also, while winter lasts, a glass of wine made from Hunzan grapes is enjoyed occasionally . . . but chiefly by the male head of the household.

Knives, forks and spoons as are used in the West are not seen in the average Hunzan home and even earthenware plates are rare. But cups and earthenware bowls are to be found in most homes. Wooden bowls fashioned out of walnut by the wood-turner of the village are also used in many homes.

The rooms are quite bare in most homes. Furniture is a luxury and a rarity. In the homes there are found usually a chest, a chair or a couch and a table. Shelves to hold dishes are seen in most every home. Occasionally, a dresser or cabinet can be found. The floor in an average Hunzan home is an earthen one with a large square hole in the center for the fire. Then, of course, there is a large square hole in the roof to allow the smoke to leave and to allow light to enter, for there are no glass windows. This is fully open in the summer but during the colder winter days the hole is kept partly or almost closed. This is the chief contributor to the eye troubles which affect many people in Hunza, as mentioned elsewhere in this book.

At one time little or no money ever entered Hunza and the meager trade that they did do with passing caravans was by means of barter. The caravans coming through from China would bring cooking utensils, cloth, silk, tea and other commodities. For these, the people of Hunza would trade some of their crops or would work as coolies, porters or bearers.

During the past few years a bit of money has come

I don't think I was struck by any unpleasant or bad odors. No doubt you would assume that being a farmer, the excrement of animals wouldn't offend me and in saying that you'd be very, very right, but even with a city man's view, I don't think you would have found the Hunzan barnyards smelly or dirty. 356

The roof of the living quarters is just high enough so that a tall man can stand up in it without bumping his head. The Hunzan roofs usually have heavy timbers strung across—at least 3 inches thick and placed about 12 inches apart. They have to be that thick and heavy because on top of this is laid earth. Practically every home has an earthen roof. The floor, too, is of hard earth that has been pounded through years of use, until it is a good sound firm floor that can be readily swept and kept clean. 342

Apart from the Mir's palace, every other home that I visited in Hunza and in Nagir had earthen floors. Now naturally one wouldn't expect an earthen floor to be spic and span or shine and glisten the way a good hardwood floor can be made to shine and glisten. These earthen or clay floors can be made smooth and even be polished, and it is actually done.

Often the room is divided off to allow for a storage room, where the dried apricot stones and other fruits and vegetables are kept for winter use. [251]

In the center of the room a hole is dug and often stones are laid at the bottom. Here the fire is laid and this is how they keep warm during the winter and where they do their cooking. Above is a hole about 18 inches square to allow the smoke to escape. The people sleep on the floor within warming distance of the fire. Beds in the average Hunzan homes are unknown, but they have bed rolls or other cloth contraptions to make the floor softer. Some of the wealthier or well-to-do [354] 513 352 352

352 Hunzans have charpoys. Most homes have a chest, or two or three or more, in which they store and keep their belongings. The chests are used to sit on and perhaps eat off. The Hunzan home we visited had a table also.

513 286 Every Hunzan home has blankets for covering during the winter and these blankets are made of homespun wool which is carded, loomed and woven by the villagers. They are equal in weight and warmth to the best blankets that are made in the West. There is no danger of the blankets not being 100 per cent wool, because wool they can get from the sheep or yak's backs.

342 Practically every Hunzan home has an upstairs, too, and this is where the family lives during the summer. It is related that each spring on the 21st of March the family moves upstairs. When there are 4 or 5 members in the family the upstairs is usually divided into two sections or rooms, leaving an open balcony in the center.

342 512 The usual Hunzan home is a place to shelter the family against storms, rain, cold and snow. It is not used nearly as much for social intercourse as it is in the West. Therefore, they don't spend as much of their time in the homes. Practically all daylight hours during spring, summer and fall are spent in the fields.

164 Some authorities attribute the good health of the Hunzans to the fact that most of their time is spent out in the open air and sunlight. Could it be that we in the West spend too much of our time inside our comfortable homes and not sufficient outside in the glorious outdoors? This is something worthy of thought and study.

Considering the heights, the ledges, the precipices and steep inclines that are found throughout this country, it is remarkable that there are few cases of injury like broken or fractured limbs, serious accidents due to falling and such. But you must remember that from infancy, children are trained and learn how to

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

misdemeanors on the scale that we know them in the Western world are practically unknown in Hunza. That being the case, it behooves us to investigate and study family life in Hunza, for juvenile delinquency is becoming a very serious and ever broadening problem in America.

I saw samples of Hunzan justice. Its simplicity made me weep . . . when I recalled our procrastinating, shackled, unwieldy, judicial system. In the Western world civil cases take months and even years to be heard in court before a judge. In Hunza there are so few cases of wrongdoings, or even individual or family problems, that a hearing can be arranged almost immediately.

Petty squabbles or differences between husband and wife or even other disputes can be brought before the Wazir or before the Mir in private. When something more serious is at stake, the grieved party or parties bring their case to the "morning durbar," which is held regularly in the courtyard surrounded by the beautiful gardens at the entrance to the Mir's palace. At the time I was at Baltit many workmen were busily engaged in erecting a large stone enclosure or balcony where the "durbars" will be held, allowing more room for spectators and greater comfort for the counsel.

During the proceedings the Mir sits comfortably ensconced on a square-shaped wooden divan, luxuriantly smothered in rugs, fancy cushions and tapestries. There is none of the strict court procedure or dourness and frigidity known to our Western judiciary system. Here one feels that he is talking to a friend—a fellow citizen—or at least, an acquaintance.

Perhaps we have carried our ideas of justice, freedom and democracy a bit too far. In order that everyone may be afforded justice and fair treatment at the hands

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

ness of their uncomfortable houses leaves an indelible mark on the national character.

It must be remembered that a house in the Hindu-Kush has no glass windows, no comfortable fire-place and chimney corner. The better-class houses are built round a courtyard, but the rooms rarely have windows, all light comes from the open door or from a skylight. Immediately below the skylight is a square open hearth, on which smoulders a fire; round this run raised platforms, on which are the beds and household paraphernalia; the smoke, before escaping through the roof, fills the whole room, blackens walls and pillars, and chokes the unfortunate inhabitants. If it is very cold, or raining and snowing heavily, the skylight is shut, the room is in pitchy darkness but for a sputtering torch, and the atmosphere horrible. It is no wonder that an existence under these circumstances should be rather depressing, and in Nagar the people get the full benefit of it, for there are several villages which during December and January only get twenty minutes' sun a day; some, I believe, get none. The men having no agricultural work on hand, owing to the land being frost-bound, there is practically nothing for them to do during the winter months but to sit idly round their smouldering fires for about sixteen hours out of the twenty-four.

Nagar has practically no outlet except down the river to Gilgit. Shut in to the east by impassable mountains, and to the south by the great Rakapushi range, there is only the bare possibility of reaching Baltistan by the Hispar pass: there is a tradition that the road was once used, but it is very doubtful if